

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee on the Governor's Proposed
Budget

Re: Proposed cuts to Regional Mental Health Boards

Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Joanne Linarte and I am writing to testify on the Governor's Proposed Biennial Budget.

I am opposed to the proposed cuts to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, in particular Southwest Regional Mental Health Board in Norwalk.

As a resident of Norwalk, and a Part Time employee of SWRMHB, I see the need for their existence in the community. I have answered the phone, to people in distress facing many issues that have lead them down the path to near suicide. I have been in the office when many people, of all walks of life, have come seeking out support groups with no other source of, " what to do", or " where to go" to teach them how to cope with their situations. I have been involved in the Mental Health Awareness Outreach Resource Tables, and Programs, that are held throughout CT., that we help support with our much needed materials.

I have even met postal workers who have requested information from me, for services simply because they see our return address on the package, I was there to mail.

I have passed out information for adults as well as the information about the Youth services and website to members of my church and prayer group.

What I am saying is that, at this time, when there is such a "Great Need" for Mental Health Support in throughout the country, it is the WRONG time to restrict their work, by crippling them, by cutting their budget.

Thank you for your attention to these important services and supports.

Respectfully

Joanne Linarte

Norwalk Resident